

# *Higher Education's Social Contract for the Public Good*

2010 Jon C. Dalton Institute  
*on College Student Values*

February 5, 2010  
Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

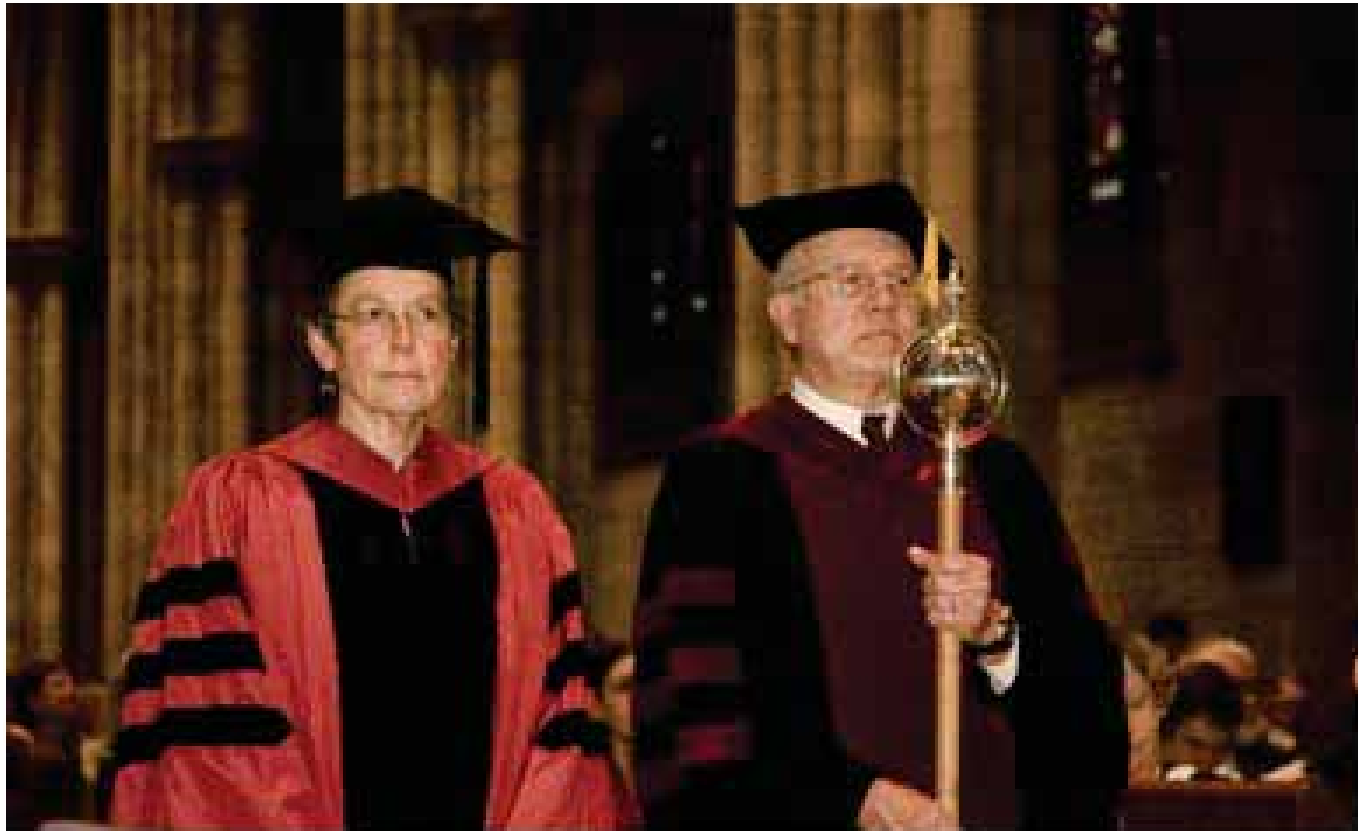
Dr. Robert Hill  
Nova Southeastern University  
Fischler School of Education and Human Services

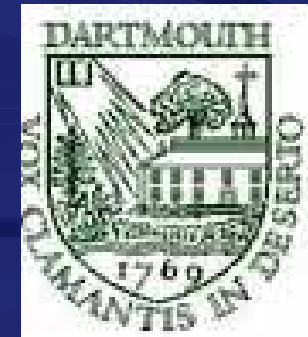
# First, some visual images

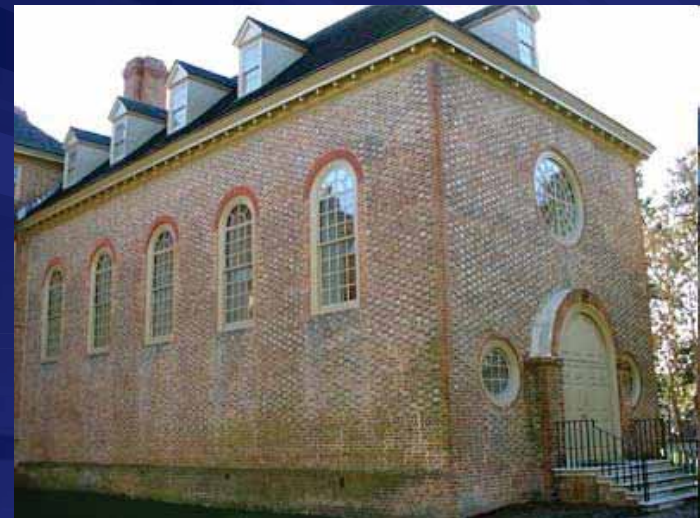
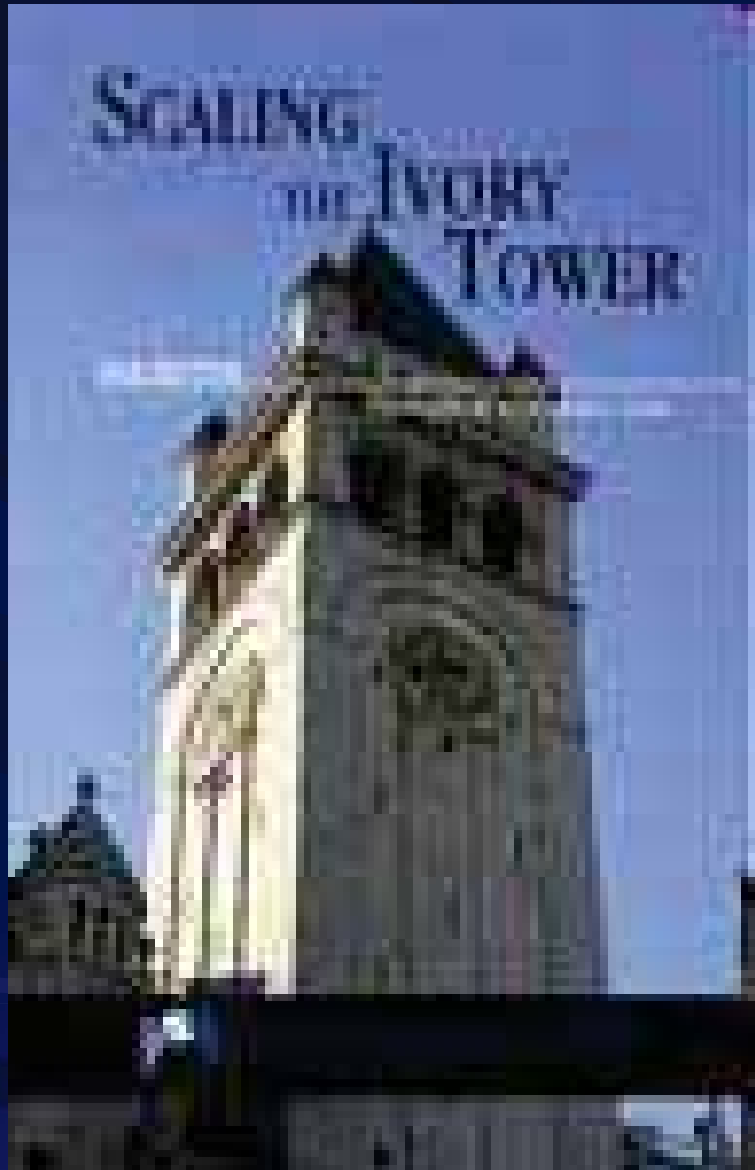


# Higher Ed is steeped in tradition



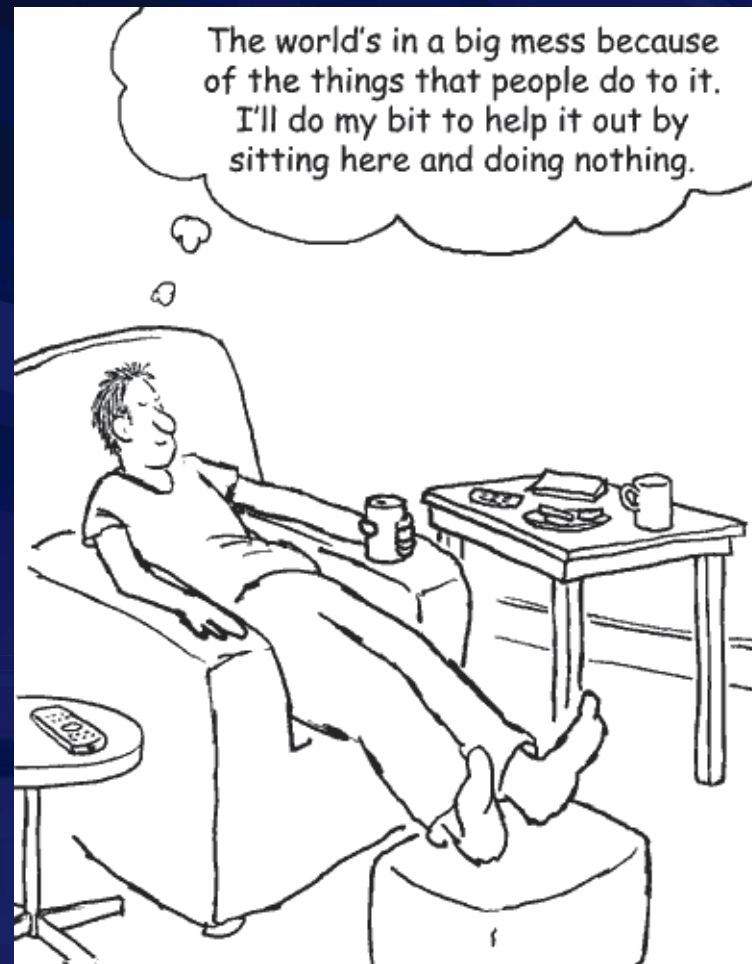






# CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

*in higher education*

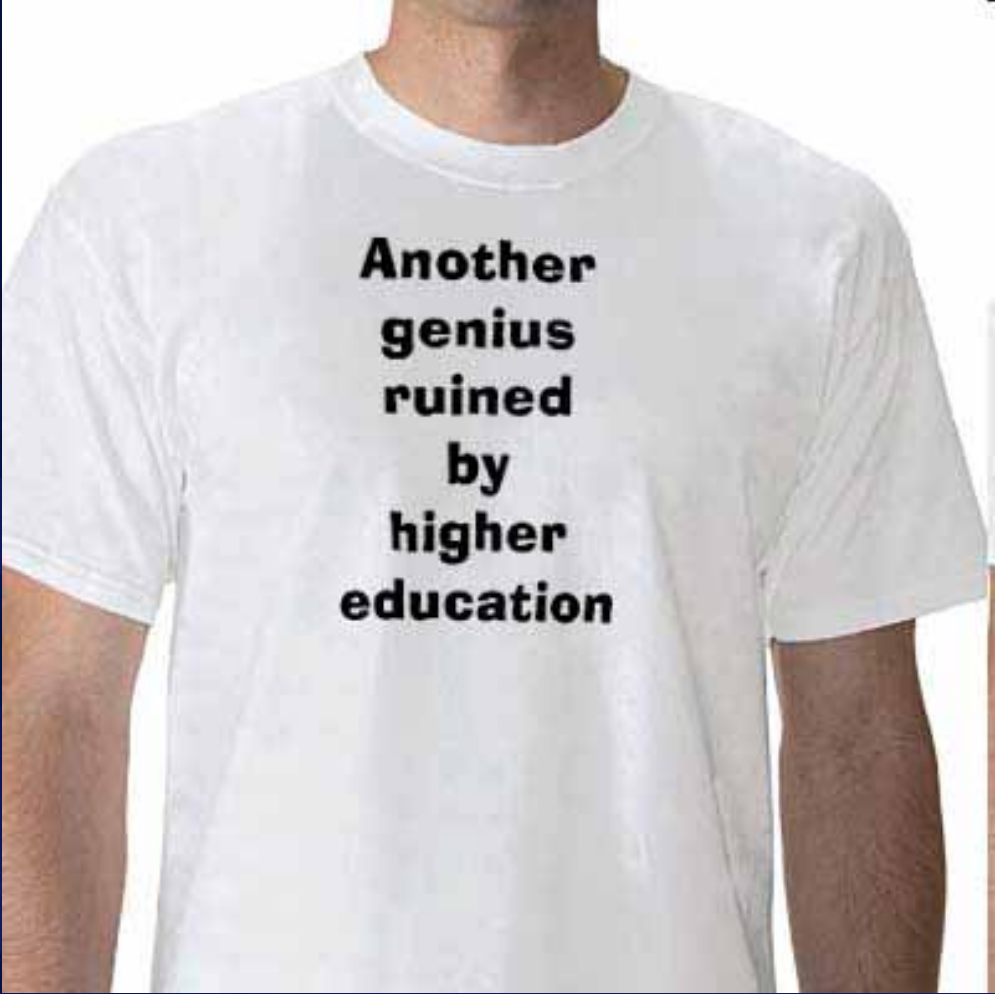




# JUSTIFICATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION







**Another  
genius  
ruined  
by  
higher  
education**



# FRATERNITIES

Why study when you can party?

There are three kinds of people in the world:

**People who make things happen.**

People who watch things happen.

People who wonder what happened.

**Which kind are you?**

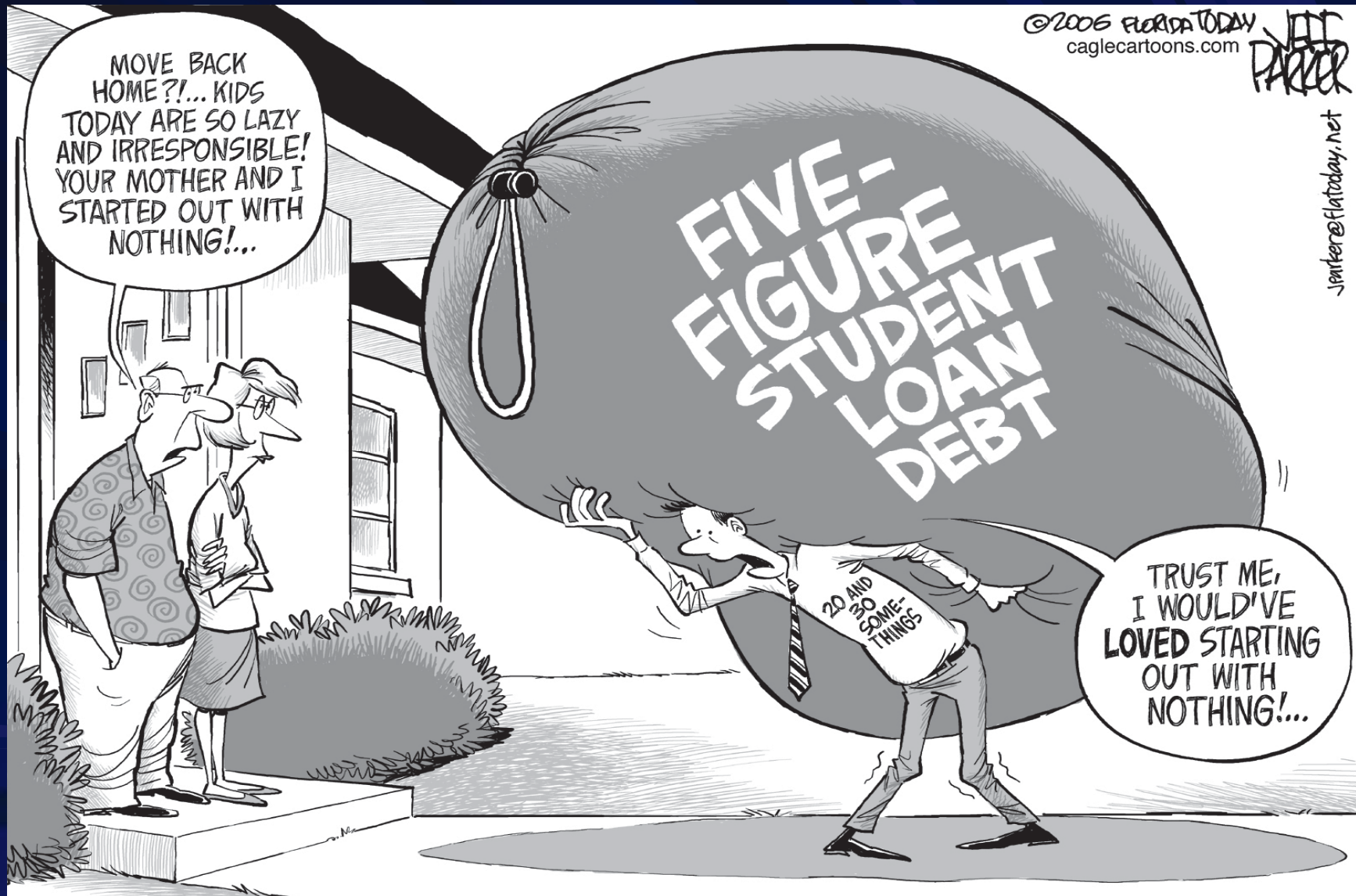
**2009 Massachusetts Student Leadership Conference**

Friday, April 3 @ UMass Boston



# CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

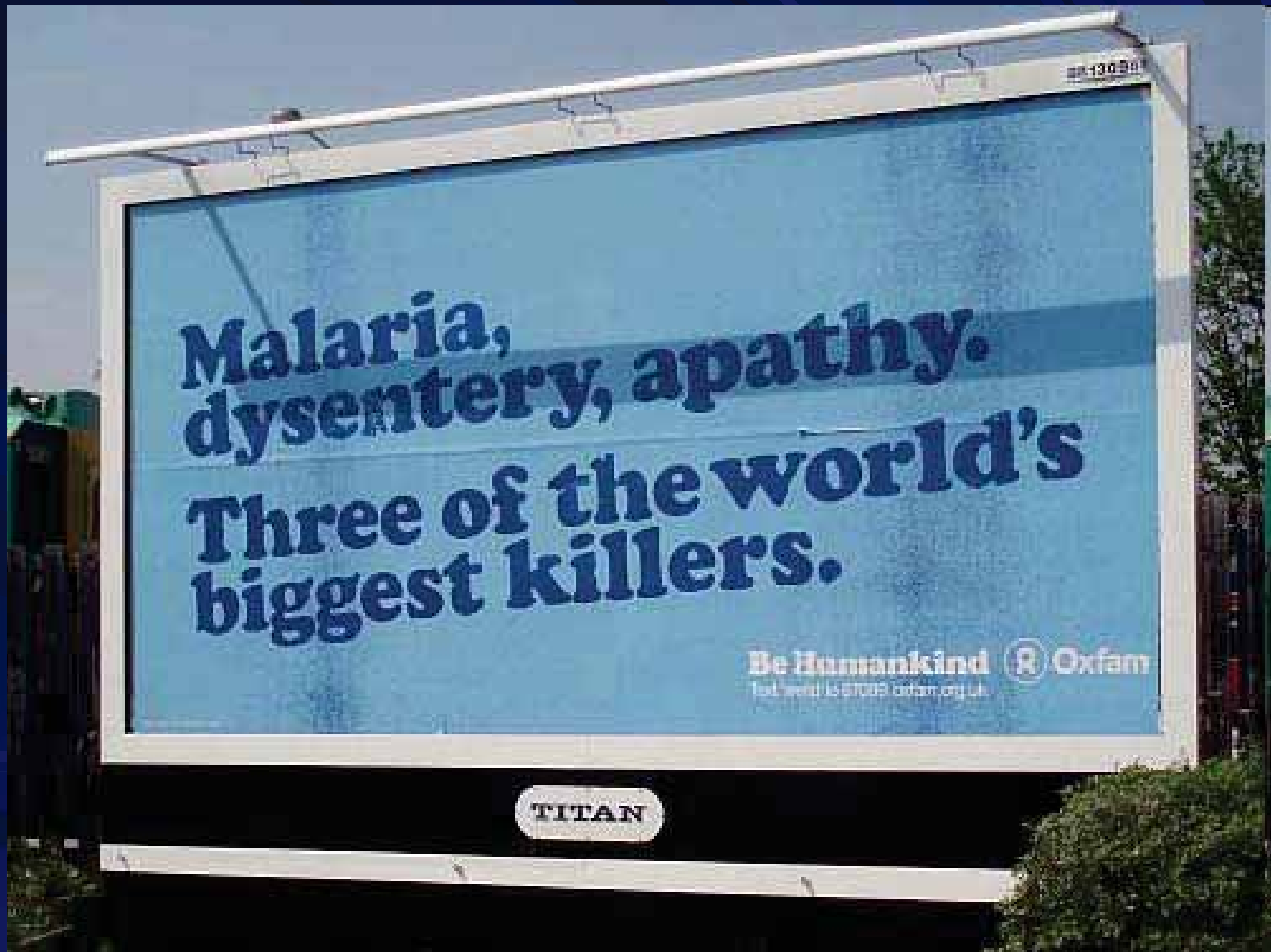
Is a Motivational Poster



MOVE BACK HOME?!... KIDS TODAY ARE SO LAZY AND IRRESPONSIBLE! YOUR MOTHER AND I STARTED OUT WITH NOTHING!...

FIVE-FIGURE STUDENT LOAN DEBT

TRUST ME, I WOULD'VE LOVED STARTING OUT WITH NOTHING!...









*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*

Margaret Mead

*US anthropologist & popularizer of anthropology (1901 - 1978)*



“...has the potential to help students acquire the necessary **knowledge, skills, values,** and **motivation** to take action in their communities as thoughtful, engaged, and **socially responsible citizens**” (Liss & Liazos, 2010, p. 50).





# Now on to Higher Education. . .



# Outline (Agenda)

- I. Brief history of HE in U.S.
- II. What is this social charter?
- III. What is civic engagement?
- IV. Today's current state of higher education
- V. The current Millennial Generation
- VI. Best practices in Civic Engagement

# Let's explore!





The western university is often characterized as one of the few institutions that have survived since medieval times.

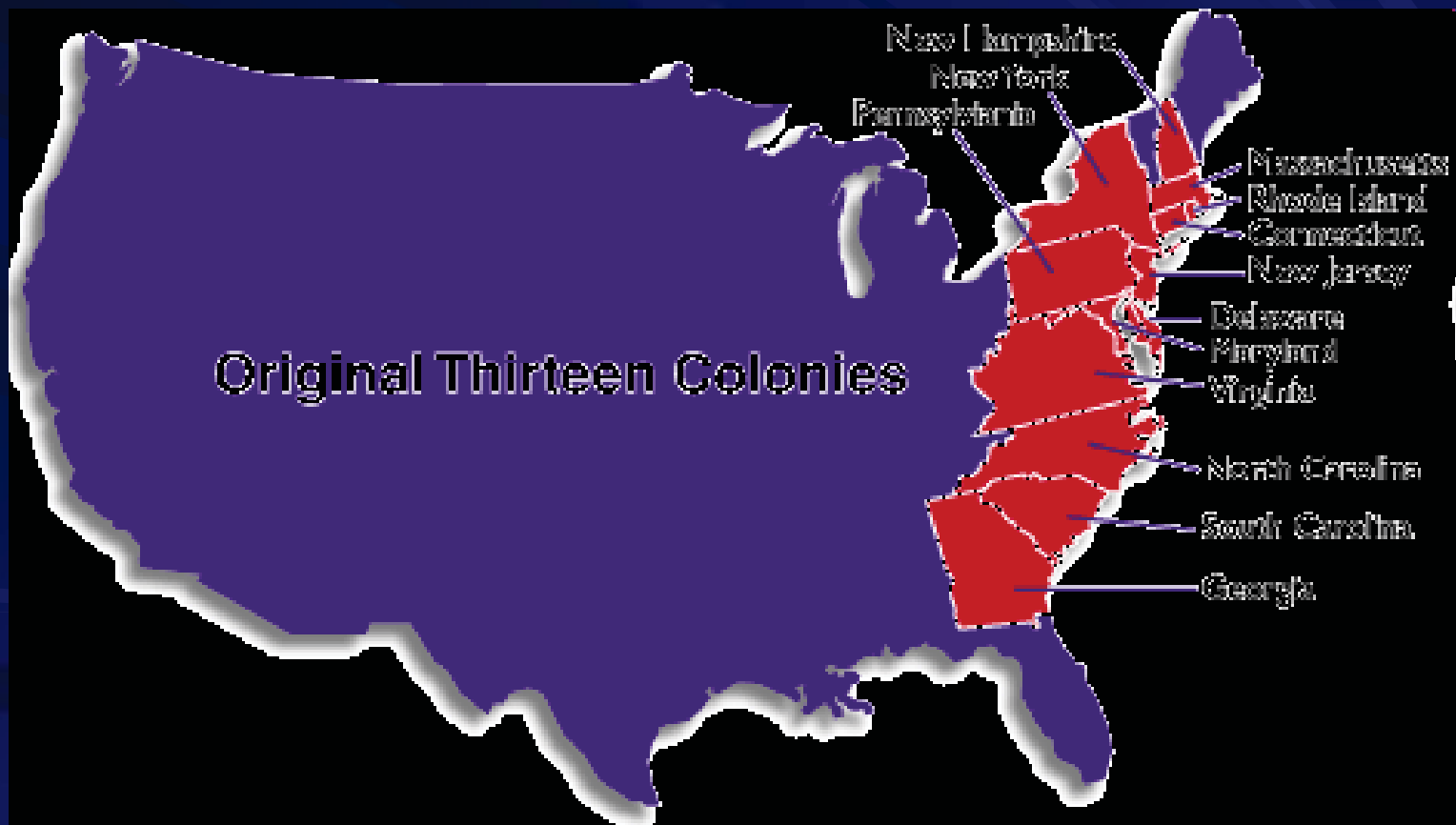




## Brief history of Higher Education in U.S.

The foremost reason for reading the history of higher education is that it teaches appreciation for the **power of tradition**. Practically every aspect of contemporary higher education can be traced to the formation of universities in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and many to the colleges in the Colonial Era. Some aspects were present in the universities of *medieval Europe*....

# Nine American Colonial Colleges



The primary purpose of the first American colleges and universities was the development of **students' character**, no less than their intellects. Character was defined in terms of moral and civic virtues.



The colleges were founded out of a need to provide the fledgling European settlements with a class of learned men and professionals that would enable their new society to survive.







COURTESY: YALE UNIVERSITY



Poldavo (Alex)

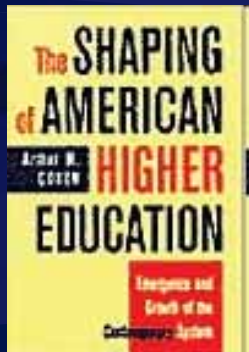
For some 200 hundred years following the founding of Harvard in 1636, the American HE system was comprised of small **private** colleges that focused on meeting the needs of an agrarian society, They provided a **classical** education to a small number of citizens, primarily the sons of the wealthy.

1819 **Thomas Jefferson** initiated a redefinition of the role of US HE and saw **mass public education** as a way to cultivate the educated citizenry needed for economic development and democracy.



The basic questions in higher education have been debated since the colleges began. **What shall be taught? Who shall learn it? Who shall pay for it?** Each question impinges on the others. Each is grounded in the history of the institution. Curriculum, faculty selection and review, student entry and progress, and institutional funding are perennial issues. Today's problems are related to yesterday's practices. The system has its own momentum, its own well-trodden paths," (p. 1).

Cohen, A. M. (1998). *The shaping of American higher education: Emergence and growth of the contemporary system*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.





A great many reports are being written about the condition of undergraduate education today. One that recently came over the desk said:

***“One fact....is becoming more and more obvious every day. The American public is not satisfied with the present course of education....The complaint is...that while everything is on the advance, our colleges are stationary; or if not quite stationary, that they are in danger of being left far behind in the rapid march of improvement.”***

The report went on to ask a number of pointed questions about the state of undergraduate education: **Why do colleges pay so little attention to civic and technological education? Why does the typical curriculum have such little regard for foreign language considering America's growing international ties? Why should young people planning on careers in business have to study an unrelated liberal arts core?**

The report said that the old arguments for maintaining the curriculum as is don't work any longer. It is not enough to say that the current curriculum worked for past generations. It is not enough to say that it teaches life-long skills such as writing and speaking.

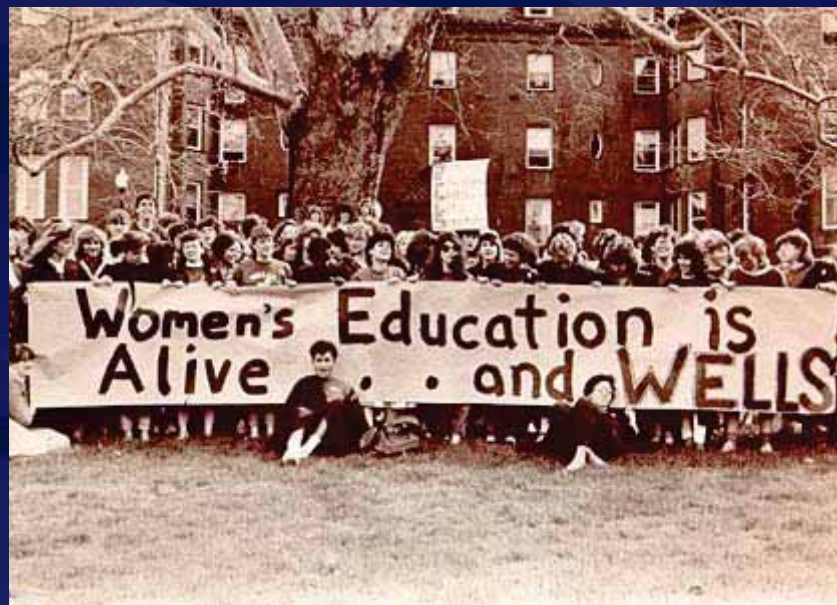
The report concluded that if colleges do not update their programs “*to meet the public demands or if they choose not to do it,*” other institutions will spring up that will.

What makes this report interesting is that it was written by the **faculty at Amherst.**

*What makes it even more interesting is that they wrote it in **1827**. Yes, over 180 years ago* (Levine, 1992).







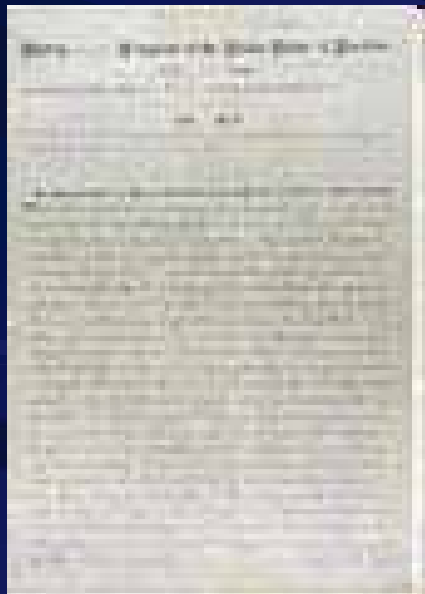




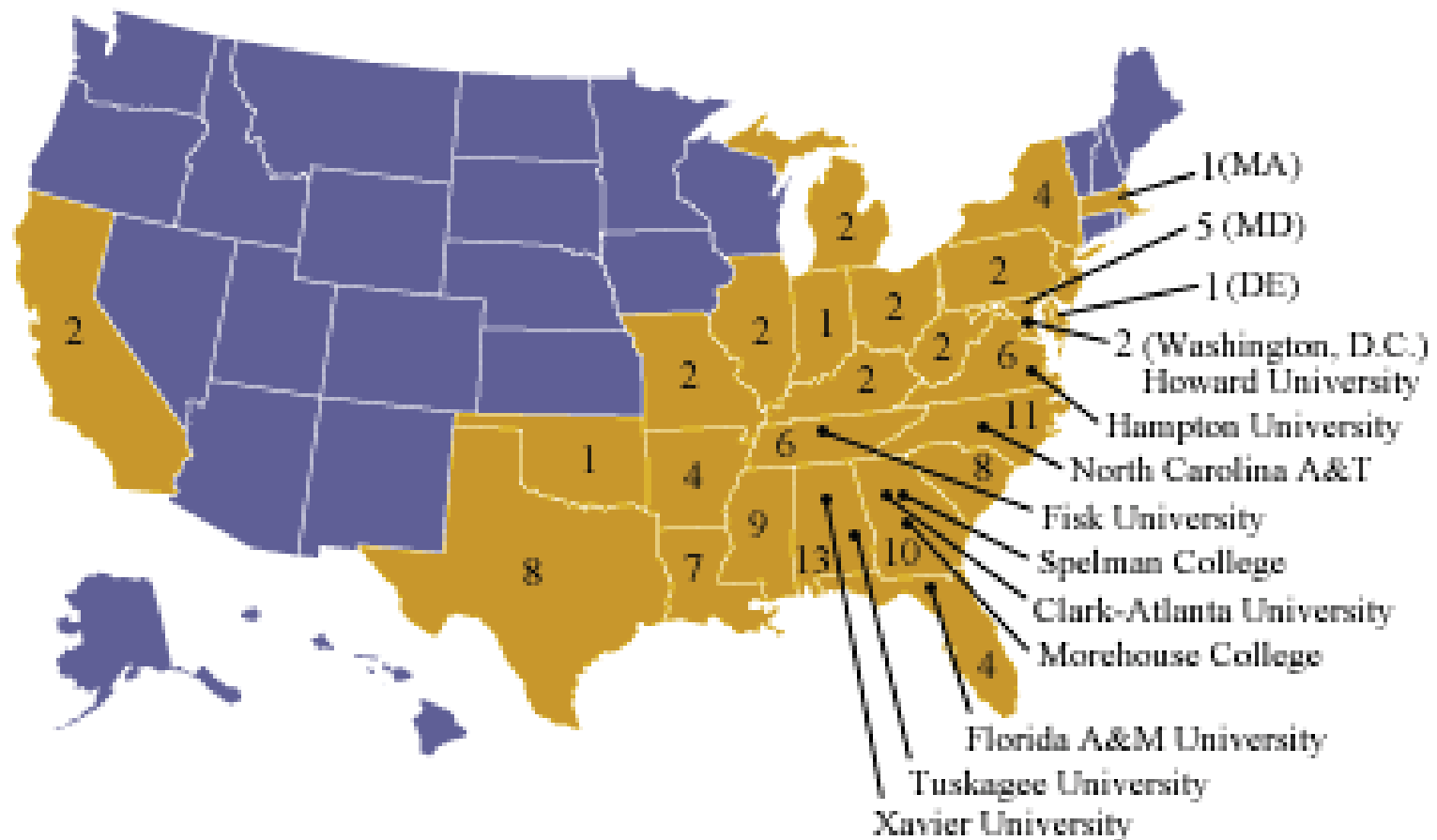


# THE PEOPLE'S COLLEGE

## THE MOVEMENT BEHIND THE MORRILL LAND GRANT ACT OF 1862







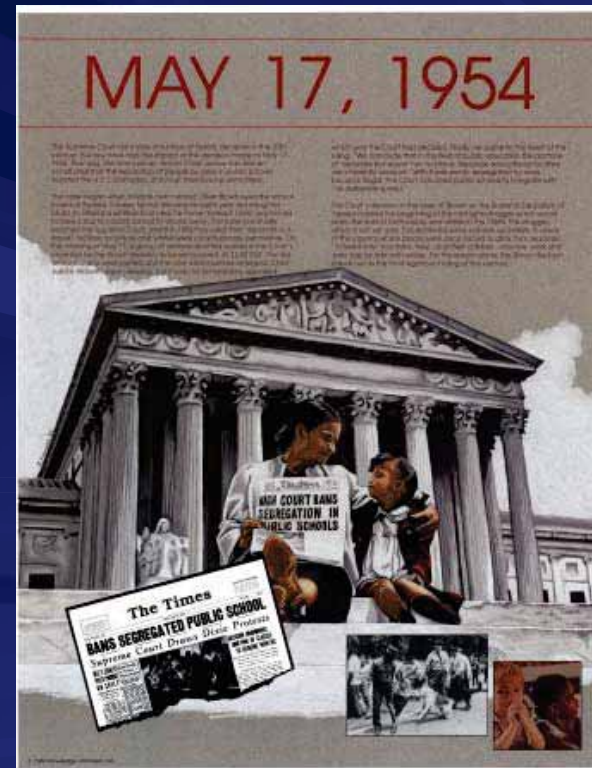
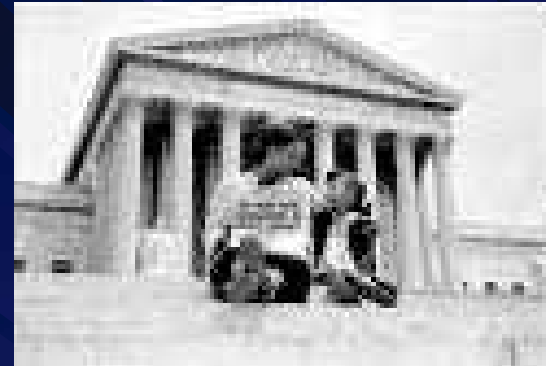
The numbers represent the number of historically black colleges or universities in each state.



# The President's Commission Higher Education for Democracy, 1947

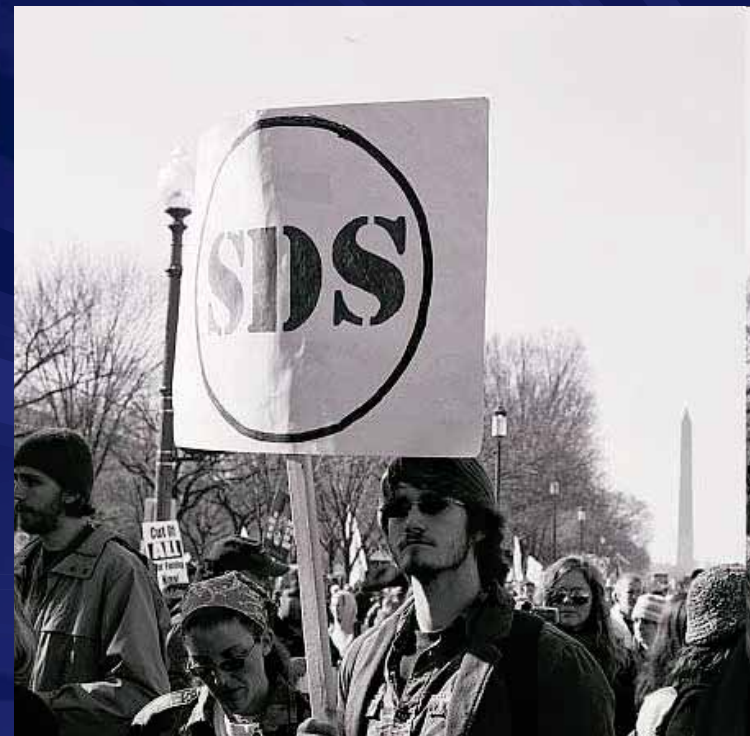












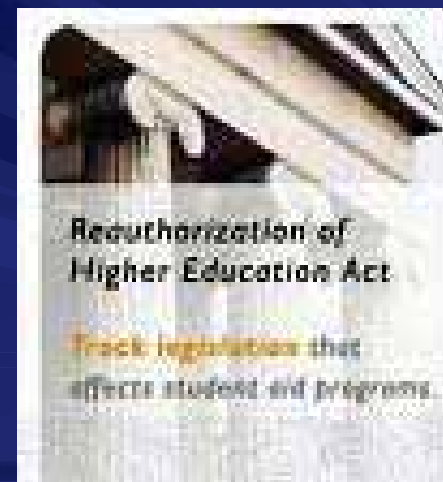




American Association  
of Community Colleges



MCCA Rally Day





“Implementing major, long-lasting change at colleges and universities is a complex and challenging process. It has been observed that changing higher education is like changing a religion in which tradition abounds, the status quo is honored, and any innovation is met with both resistance and high emotion.

Reform in higher education is further complicated by leadership turnover, a reward system focused more on priorities external to the institution than inside it, and search committees that often apply criteria that have little to do with the institution's needs or the position's actual demands,” (p. 15).

Robert M. Diamond (Ed) (2002). Field guide to academic leadership. Jossey-Bass.

**Shifting gears here. . .**



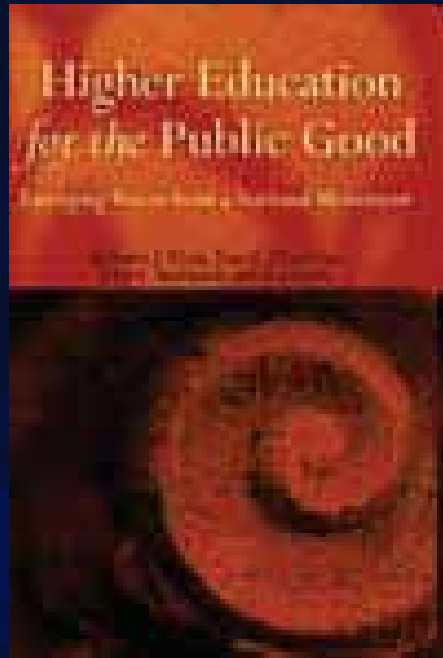


# What is this *social charter*?

The social charter between higher education and the public includes such commitments as:

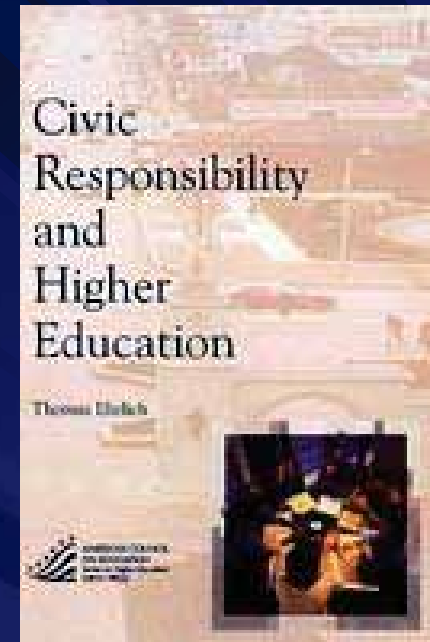
- Developing research to improve society
- Training leaders for public service
- Educating citizens to serve the democracy
- Increasing economic development
- Critiquing public policy

Kezar, Chambers & Burkhardt (2005)



**Higher Education for the Public Good:  
Emerging Voices from a National  
Movement**

Kezar, Chambers, Burkhardt  
(Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education)



**Civic Responsibility And Higher  
Education** Thomas Ehrlich

(American Council On  
Education Oryx Press Series On Higher  
Education)

**All HE institutions**, both public and private, both nonprofit and for-profit, and from state colleges to research universities to community colleges to a wider variety of technical and professional schools, **serve a public purpose.**



## The Special Role of HE in Society As a Public Good for the Public Good

“HE has long occupied a special place in society. Viewed as the **creator of knowledge**, the **producer of leaders**, and the **engine of the economy**, higher education’s role has been considered critical to society’s well being. Equally if not more important, HE has been seen as the **intellectual conscience** of society, above the marketplace throng. **In return, HE has received public support, been exempted from taxation, and often screened from the scrutiny of the public eye.** Much of that has changed.”

(Newman & Couturier, 2002, p. 6)

The terms **covenant** & **charter**

“**Charter**” describes the relationship between HE & society – has a corporate, transactional connotation that brings to mind legalistic & historically stable, maybe rigid qualities.

“**Covenant**” from the *Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities* (2000) to best frame the relationship between HE and society. It connotes religious, moral, or spiritual images.



“I use these terms to express the moral, enduring, reciprocal, and socially articulated nature of the relationship between colleges and universities, as social institutions, and the public(s) that create and support them.

The publicly aimed, if not publicly mandated, relationship between HE and society has both ***transactional*** (contractual) and ***transformational*** (moral & mutually developmental) qualities embedded with in it. To be clear, **covenants** & **charters** require all parties to embrace particular sets of responsibilities” (p. 7).

Tony Chambers’ “The Special Role of Higher Education in Society” in Kezar, Chambers, & Burkhardt (2005) **Higher Education for the Public Good**

# The Array of Higher Education Benefits

## Public

## Private

### Economic

- Increased tax revenues
- Greater productivity
- Increased consumption
- Decreased reliance on governmental financial support

- Higher salaries and benefits
- Employment
- Higher savings levels
- Improved working conditions
- Personal / professional mobility

### Social

- Reduced crime rates
- Increased charitable giving / community service
- Increased quality of civic life
- Social cohesion / appreciation of diversity
- Improved ability to adapt to and use technology

- Improved health / life expectancy
- Improved quality of life for offspring
- Better consumer decision making
- Increased personal status
- More hobbies, leisure activities



**What has brought us to this point where states weigh public good versus private gain, seeking new *balance*, where *balance* wasn't even a consideration?**

## In a civilized society

One way we serve the public good is by caring about the least fortunate – serving the public good means that we make sure our least fortunate individuals are served.

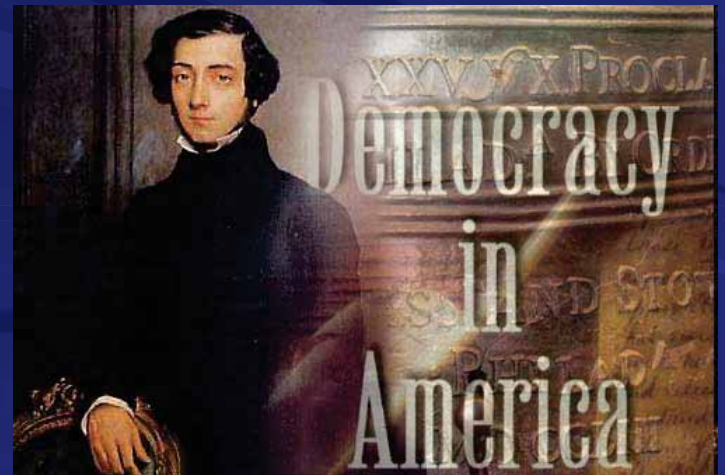
Another way we serve the public good is by protecting and ensuring the quality of the educational experience we offer.

**(FOSTERING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IS ANOTHER)**



In the 1830s, French historian Alex de Tocqueville traveled throughout the US and wrote about his surprise at the extent to which Americans worked together to solve their common problems.

“Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations....Wherever at the head of some new undertaking you see the government in France, or a man of rank in England, in the United States you will be sure to find an association” (Tocqueville, 1835/1956, p. 198).



Frederick Rudolph (1990) estimated that more than **700 colleges died in the US before 1860**. Two major explanations may account for their relatively short lives:

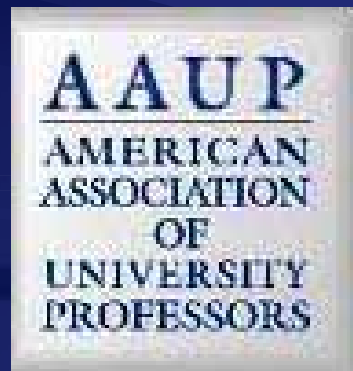
- 1) There was not enough money to support all the nation's colleges,
- 2) Most of the colleges **no longer responded to the needs of those they purported to serve.**

- From 1700-1900, less than 5% of Americans between 18-22 enrolled in college.
- Between WWI & WWII, this figure increased to about 20%, rising to 33% in 1960, and dramatically expanding to more than 50% in the 1970's.

John Thelin

In 1940, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Association of American Colleges (AAC) issued a joint “***Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure***,” a document that is still in force.

Its first paragraph included this admonition: “Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends on the free search for truth and its free exposition” (AAUP, 1995, p. 3).

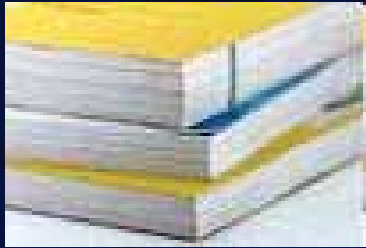




Some of the public sees faculty work as increasingly selfish and privatized. They see **academic freedom**, in other words, as smokescreen for furthering the interests of the individual faculty member and those of the institution. As Eugene Rice has observed, “**HE is regarded by all too many as a private benefit, not a public good**” (p. 6 as cited in William Tierney (Ed.) (1998) **The Responsive University**, p. 79).

“In choosing as the title of this volume **A Larger Sense of Purpose: Higher Education and Society**, I meant to convey the notion that universities, like other social institutions and even individual, ought to serve interests that include but move beyond narrow self-serving concerns. The epigraph of this volume, the Latin phrase *non noblis solum*, “not for ourselves alone,” echoes this thought. To my regret, this is one of those ideas that, while applauded in principle, is easily lost in the challenge of meeting one’s day-to-day responsibilities” (p. 1)

**Harold Shapiro (2005) – former president of University of Michigan & then at Princeton**



**Mid-1980's Carnegie Foundation** report said there was “a crisis” in education as we have “failed to provide education for citizenship”

**Early 1990's** a report by the **Kettering Foundation** charged HE “appears to leave students without concepts or language to explore what is political about their lives”

**1998 National Commission on Civic Renewal**

**2000 The National Forum** (formerly the **Kellogg Forum on HE & the Public Good**) was established at the Univ. of Michigan.

In recent years prominent leaders across the country such as **Derek Bok** and **Clark Kerr** have expressed a concern that higher education is no longer serving the public good in ways that it has in the past. They worry that higher education is foregoing its role as a social institution and public role in society and is instead functioning as **an industry**.

**So what has happened? Why is this charter being altered or rejected?** Is it being lost as public policy as institutional decisions unintentionally focus more on revenue generation and the individual benefits of higher education rather than on its broader social role and benefits? Perhaps it is because some institutions have to grapple with declining funds and state goals that may not prioritize higher education.



Additionally, it is because some schools see the production of skilled workers to enter the global marketplace as the primary goal of higher education. Higher education has always served the labor market in one way or another and to one degree or another, **but production of workers was never the primary goal of higher education.** Moreover, higher education has now become “a market” in which individuals purchase good for their personal benefit.

# What is *civic engagement*?

Excerpts from *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000.

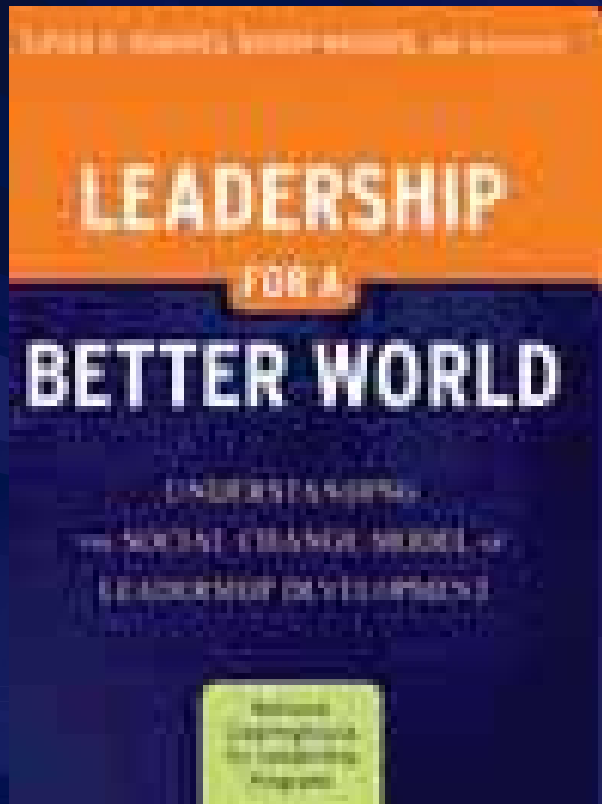
- Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes.  
- *Preface, page vi*
- A morally and civically responsible individual recognizes himself or herself as a member of a larger social fabric and therefore considers social problems to be at least partly his or her own; such an individual is willing to see the moral and civic dimensions of issues, to make and justify informed moral and civic judgments, and to take action when appropriate.  
- *Introduction, page xxvi*

[http://www.nytimes.com/ref/college/collegespecial2/coll\\_aascu\\_defi.html](http://www.nytimes.com/ref/college/collegespecial2/coll_aascu_defi.html)

**1,940,000** hits in *Google*  
for **Civic Engagement**



# Forms of Individual Civic Engagement from Komives, Wagner, & Associates **Leadership for a Better World** (2009)



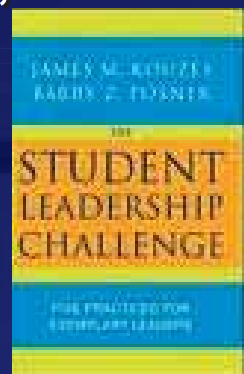


- Direct Service
- Community Research
- Advocacy and Education
- Capacity Building
- Political Involvement
- Socially Responsible Personal & Professional Behavior
- Philanthropic Giving
- Participation in Associations

The term *citizenship* is often perceived as nebulous notion, centering solely on voting, government, and political parties. College students often comment on the challenge of incorporating this grand idea of “citizenship” into their lives at school, at home, and among friends. For many students, citizenship seems to be much more than casting a ballot during an election year, but what it is beyond that is not always clear” (p. 149)

## From Kouzes & Posner's **The Student Leadership Challenge** (2008)

“The most significant contribution student leaders make is not simply to today’s issues and goals but rather to the long-term development of people, communities, and institutions so they can adapt, change, prosper, and grow....It is a process ordinary people use when they are bringing forth the best from themselves and others. When the leader in everyone is liberated, extraordinary things happen” (p. 2).





## Definition of Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is

- (a) active collaboration
- (b) that builds on the resources, skills, expertise, and knowledge of the campus and community
- (c) to improve the quality of life in communities
- (d) in a manner that is consistent with the campus mission.

The definition of civic engagement as laid out by the **IUPUI Center for Service and Learning**.  
<http://csl.iupui.edu/>



### Wheel of Civic Engagement



Karin Cotterman 2003

**Civic Engagement Center at National-Louis University**

<http://www.nl.edu/cec/whatis.cfm>